

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Initially, applicants note an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) was filed in the present application on February 9, 2005. At this time applicants have not received confirmation of consideration of that properly filed IDS. Applicants respectfully request that a form PTO-1449 be returned to applicants acknowledging consideration of the IDS filed February 9, 2005. For convenience a copy of that filed IDS is attached hereto.

Claims 1-39 are pending in this application. Claims 1-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claims 1-17 and 19-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,979,757 to Tracy et al. (herein “Tracy”) in view of U.S. patent 4,882,724 to Vela et al. (herein “Vela”). Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tracy in view of Vela and further in view of U.S. patent 4,189,730 to Murdock.

Addressing first the rejection of claims 1-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

The claims were rejected as the term “voluntary” was not clear in view of the specification. In response to that rejection the claims are amended to no longer recite the term “voluntary” and to now instead recite the term “automatically”. That subject matter is believed to be clear from the original specification, see for example page 44, lines 2-8. Moreover, the meaning of the term “automatically” is even further clarified in the claims by reciting an operation to be carried out by the radio base station automatically “by an initiative of the radio base station”, i.e., without requiring any user action at the radio portable terminal to initiate such an operation of the radio base station. That subject matter is also believed to be clearly supported by the original specification for example at page 55, line 22 to page 61, line 14.

In view of the presently submitted claim amendments and foregoing comments, the claims are believed to be in full compliance with all requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Addressing now the above-noted prior art rejections, those rejections are traversed by the present response.

As noted above, certain features in the claims are clarified as to automatically initiated by the radio base station.

Independent claims 1, 2, 17, 19, 37, and 38 are directed to a case in which a radio base station automatically requests a notification of a terminal identifier to a radio portable terminal through a radio LAN by an initiative of the radio base station upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into a covered area of the radio base station. In that case the radio base station also automatically requests a check of whether the radio portable terminal is an electronic coupon sending/collecting target or not to a server device through the local network by an initiative of the radio base station upon receiving the notification from the radio portable terminal, and automatically carries out processing for sending/collecting the electronic coupon with respect to the radio portable terminal through the radio LAN by an initiative of the radio base station upon receiving the result of the check from the server device.

With such an operation it becomes possible to automatically send or receive electronic coupons between a portable terminal of a user and a base station, for example, a business enterprise, without utilizing communication providers. Thus, the radio LAN in the claimed invention is utilized in a specific instance, which is believed to be neither taught nor suggested by Tracy or Vela.

More specifically, Tracy and Vela completely fail to disclose or suggest any teaching of a system in which a radio base station automatically requests a notification of a terminal

identifier to the radio portable terminal upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into its covered area, automatically requests a check of the radio portable terminal to a server device upon receiving a notification from the radio portable terminal, and automatically carries out processing for sending/collecting the electronic coupon with respect to the radio portable terminal upon receiving a check result from the server device, all done by the initiative of the radio base station.

Tracy is merely directed to a shopping system such as shown in Figure 1 therein in which customer desired data including electronic coupons are provided from a central host 14 through multiple access points 13 to a portable terminal 12 in response to a request or a selection of an item to be purchased made by the user at the portable terminal 12. Applicants note that although the portable terminal 12 of Tracy transmits the terminal identifier to the central host as recognized in the Office Action, Tracy completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for automatically requesting a notification of the terminal identifier of the portable terminal 12 (corresponding to the claimed “radio portable terminal”) by an initiative of the access point 13 (corresponding to the claimed “radio base station”) upon detecting an entry of the portable terminal 12 into a covered area of the access point 13. The transmission of the terminal identifier by the portable terminal 12 of Tracy is not carried out in response to any requests from the access point 13.

Applicants further note Tracy completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for automatically requesting a check of whether the radio portable terminal is an electronic coupon sending/collecting target or not to a server device by an initiative of the radio base station upon receiving the notification from the radio portable terminal. In fact, Tracy fails to describe or suggest any function of the central host 14 to check whether the radio portable terminal is an electronic coupon sending/collecting target or not in response to a request from the access point 13.

Applicants note that Tracy also completely fails to disclose or suggest automatically carrying out processing for sending/collecting the electronic coupon by an initiative of the radio base station upon receiving the result of the check from the server device. In Tracy sending/collecting of an electronic coupon is initiated by a request or selection made by the user at the portable terminal 12.

Thereby, Tracy fails to disclose or suggest any teaching or suggestion of the access point 13 carrying out a sequential operation of automatically requesting a notification of a terminal identifier to the radio portable terminal upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into its covered area, automatically requesting a check of the radio portable terminal to a server device upon receiving a notification from the radio portable terminal, and automatically carrying out processing for sending/collecting the electronic coupon with respect to the radio portable terminal upon receiving a check result from the server device, all done by the initiative of the radio base station, as required in the claims.

Vela does not cure the deficiencies in Tracy. More specifically, Vela merely discloses a communication system from a marketing area in which audio/visual messages to a shopper are provided from a control center 23 to relay units 27 provided on shopping carts 28 through a signal delivery system 26.

Applicants also note Vela completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for automatically requesting a check of whether the radio portable terminal is an electronic coupon sending/collecting target or not to a server device by an initiative of the radio base station upon receiving the notification from the radio portable terminal. In fact, Vela actually fails to describe any function of the central center 23 to check whether the radio portable terminal is an electronic coupon sending/collecting target or not, in response to a request from the signal delivery system 28, as apparent from the fact that Vela does not mention any electronic coupon.

Applicants also note Vela completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for automatically carrying out processing for sending/collecting the electronic coupon by an initiative of the radio base station upon receiving the result of the check from the server device, as apparent from the fact that Vela does not even mention any electronic coupon.

Thereby, Vela actually fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for the signal delivery system 26 to carry out a sequential operation of automatically requesting a notification of a terminal identifier to the radio portable terminal upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into its covered area, automatically requesting a check of the radio portable terminal to a server device upon receiving a notification from the radio portable terminal, and automatically carrying out processing for sending/collecting the electronic coupon with respect to the radio portable terminal upon receiving a check result from the server device, all done by the initiative of the radio base station, as required in the noted claims.

Consequently, Tracy and Vela completely fail to suggest or imply all the claimed limitations of the independent claims 1 (method), 2 (system), 17 (radio base station device), 19 (radio portable terminal device), and 37 (method), and therefore a combination of Tracy and Vela does not render obvious independent claims 1, 2, 17, 19 and 37, and claims 3-16, 18, and 20-22, dependent therefrom.

Independent claims 23, 24, and 39 also distinguish over the applied art, as discussed next.

Independent claims 23, 24 and 39 are directed to a case in which the radio base station automatically requests a notification of a terminal identifier to the radio portable terminal through the radio LAN by an initiative of the radio base station upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into a covered area of the radio base station and automatically notifies the terminal identifier to the server device through the local network by an initiative of the radio base station, and the server device automatically records and manages a management

information containing the terminal identifier of the radio portable terminal and information regarding a successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility indicated by an arranged location of each radio base station.

With such operations and structures, it becomes possible to automatically record information on successively moving locations of a user as the user moves within the facility, by utilizing the communications between the radio portable terminal held by the user and the radio base stations arranged at various locations in the facility through the radio LAN, which can then be utilized for more detailed analysis of information regarding facility users such as customers.

In this regard, a combination of Tracy and Vela completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for such a system in which a radio base station automatically requests a notification of a terminal identifier to the radio portable terminal upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into its covered area and automatically notifies the terminal identifier to the server device, and the server device automatically records and manages a management information containing the terminal identifier of the radio portable terminal and information regarding a successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility indicated by an arranged location of each radio base station.

Tracy completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for automatically requesting a notification of the terminal identifier of the portable terminal 12 (corresponding to the claimed “radio portable terminal”) by an initiative of the access point 13 (corresponding to the claimed “radio base station”) upon detecting an entry of the portable terminal 12 into a covered area of the access point 13. The transmission of the terminal identifier by the portable terminal 12 of Tracy is not carried out in response to any request from the access point 13.

As noted above, Tracy also completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for the central host 14 to automatically record and manage a management information containing the terminal identifier of the radio portable terminal and information regarding a successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility indicated by an arranged location of each radio base station. In fact, Tracy merely mentions the locations of items, dispenser units, etc., which are known to the central host 14 in advance and provided from the central host 14 to the portable terminal 12 in response to a request from the user, not the successively moving locations of the radio portable terminal to be automatically recorded and managed by the server device. Also, Tracy merely mentions the tracking of the customer's shopping history or coupon, not the successively moving location of the radio portable terminal.

Thereby, Tracy actually fails to disclose any teaching for the access point 13 to carry out an operation of automatically requesting a notification of a terminal identifier to the radio portable terminal upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal into its covered area and automatically notifying the terminal identifier to the server device, and the central host 14 to carry out an operation of automatically recording and managing a management information containing the terminal identifier of the radio portable terminal and information regarding a successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility indicated by an arranged location of each radio base station.

Vela, as noted above, completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for automatically requesting a notification of the terminal identifier of the relay unit 27 (corresponding to the claimed "radio portable terminal") by an initiative of the signal deliver system 28 (corresponding to the claimed "radio base station") upon detecting an entry of the relay unit 27 into a covered area of the signal delivery system 26. In fact, Vela actually fails

to disclose any notification of the terminal identifier from the relay unit 27 in response to a request from the signal delivery system 26.

Applicants also note Vela completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for the control center 23 to automatically record and manage a management information containing the terminal identifier of the radio portable terminal and information regarding a successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility indicated by an arranged location of each radio base station. Although Vela uses the carts location data file containing data representing and distinguishing the shopping carts (relay units) and representing the x, y coordinate location of each such card (relay unit) in the marketing area as noted in the Office Action, the device of Vela only uses these data for the purpose of sending visual messages for guiding the shopper through the marketing area as shown in Figs. 13 to 18. Fig. 11 also only shows an exemplary passage taken by an exemplary shopper for the purpose of explaining this operation, not for the purpose of teaching how to track the successively moving locations of the radio portable terminal.

Applicants note in particular, the present invention only needs each radio base station to notify the terminal identifier of the detected radio portable terminal to the server device, without any information on the current x, y coordinate location of the radio portable terminal, while the server device records the arranged location of each radio base station which notified the terminal identifier, which is known to the server device in advance, as an indication of the successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility. Vela completely fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for recording and managing the management information in such a manner.

Thereby, Vela actually fails to disclose or suggest any teaching for the signal delivery system 26 to carry out an operation of automatically requesting a notification of a terminal identifier to the radio portable terminal upon detecting an entry of the radio portable terminal

into its covered area and automatically notifying the terminal identifier to the server device, and the control center 23 to carry out an operation of automatically recording and managing a management information containing the terminal identifier of the radio portable terminal and information regarding a successively moving location of the radio portable terminal within the facility indicated by an arranged location of each radio base station.

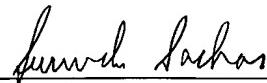
Consequently, Tracy and Vela completely fail to suggest or imply all the claimed limitations of the independent claims 23 (method), 24 (system), 38 and 39 (methods). Thereby no combination of teachings of Tracy and Vela renders obvious independent claims 23, 24, 38 and 39, and claims 25-36 dependent therefrom.

In view of these foregoing comments, Applicants respectfully submit the claims as currently written are in full compliance with all requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, and distinguish over the applied art.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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